



Health Department

John O. Norquist
Mayor

Seth L. Foldy, MD
Commissioner of Health

Bevan K. Baker, CHE
Health Operations Director

Administration



Frank P. Zeidler Municipal Building, 841 North Broadway, 3rd Floor, Milwaukee, WI 53202-3653 phone (414) 286-3521 fax (414) 286-5990
web site: www.milwaukee.gov

**For immediate release
November 5, 2003**

**Media Contact: Raquel Madrid-Berkel
414-286-3175 (Office)
414-318-5711 (Pager)**

MILWAUKEE SMOKE-FREE SPORTS PROGRAM- RECIPIENT OF THE MILWAUKEE HEALTH CHAMPION AWARD

Award encourages teamwork and leadership for healthy community change

The first annual Milwaukee Health Champion will be **awarded today, November 5, 2003 at the Urban Health Forum held at the Italian Community Center**. The City of Milwaukee Health Commissioner, Seth L. Foldy established The Milwaukee Health Champion award to promote public health vision and leadership in the city. A strong criteria emphasis of the award focuses in on the encouragement of teamwork and leadership for healthy community change. Teams were selected based on demonstration of three types of leadership: 1) They create change to improve a measurable community health outcome 2) They forge successful partnerships between the community and the City of Milwaukee Health Department 3) They actively involve students, tomorrow's health leaders.

The Milwaukee Smoke-Free Sports Program has been active for three years with dozens of carefully-trained high-school-aged educators that have led over 20,000 Milwaukee Public School (MPS) students toward smoke-free, active lifestyles. The message is reinforced by over 6,500 parents and sports coaches trained to support children's healthy choices. The long-term impact is sustained by a multi-session, progressive curriculum, student pledges, environmental cues and on-going MPS staff support for youth achievement of health goals. Judges were particularly impressed by the team's commitment to program evaluation and continuous improvement; the program's ability to leverage existing MPS programs and staff; the way youth are surrounded by peers, older youth and adults who all reinforce health goals and the careful training and effective mobilization of a sizable cadre of youth educators. This program uses teamwork to make a measurable difference in Milwaukee's health! Team participants include staff from the Wisconsin Division of Public Health, Milwaukee Public Schools Recreation and Community Services Department, Milwaukee Health Department, American Cancer Society, American Lung Association, and students from Custer, South Division, Hamilton, Vincent and Rufus King High Schools.

MORE

The two runners-up included the **Lead Program Chemistry Internship** in which an Alverno College student explored the environmental and clinical impact of childhood lead poisoning and its control while learning to analyze lead content in paint, dust and blood samples in the Milwaukee Health Department laboratory. **Crossing Out Smoking Street Team** was also a runner-up. This youth-led, adult-guided team promotes tobacco-free environments and kids. They achieved a ban on smoking in City-owned buildings and vehicles, trained restaurant owners on the advantages of going smoke-free, and published a directory of smoke-free restaurants. Tens of thousands of youth learned from COS's educational puzzles and edgy advertising. (Strive Media Institute, American Lung Association, American Cancer Society, Milwaukee Health Department, and students from Tech, Madison University, Metro, Riverside, Rufus King, Bay View, Brown Deer, South Division and St. Joan Antida High Schools, Milwaukee HS of the Arts, Samuel Morse Middle School and MATC.)

The projects were evaluated by a six-member judging panel, representatives from the business, the faith community, Partnerships for Healthy Milwaukee, a health advocacy group, a health care organization and the City of Milwaukee Health Department.

The award process also seeks to document, share and celebrate the work of all teams that apply. The work of every team will be added to a World Wide Web archive, available to browsers around the neighborhood and around the globe. Their projects can teach and inspire others who seek to work together for healthier communities. This archive will be posted at HealthyMilwaukee.org and www.Milwaukee.gov/health.

###